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THE PROFITS.

Will it pay? is a sound, sensible question. It furnishes a practical standard wherewith to gauge the merits of those rose-tinted schemes with which projectors are so fond of dazzling us. A coarse test, no doubt, but amply sufficient for common use, and one that has toppled down the card-castle of many a full-grown child. This curt inquiry is forced upon us by the very necessities of our position in the world. We, the race of Adam, must work ere we can eat, and if our labour be thrown away on idle tasks, there will be scarcity to-morrow. And what is true of the mass is true of the units that compose it. Humanly speaking, our toil must be of a profitable nature, or it is worthless.

It is all very well for the political economists to build up their broad theories, and to declare that each individual makes the best bargain possible with society for his services; they mistake the will for the deed. What sort of bargain has stout Ronald there, digging potatoes in Uist or Eigg for a shilling a day at best, partly nourished on shell-fish and sea-weed, made for his services? Or Dick, the Dorsetshire shepherd, who has been wet to the skin, and chilled to the marrow hundreds of times during the forty years that he has tended sheep on the bleak and misty downs, and who has an old age of rheumatism before him, and the Union looming in the distance?

No; ignorance, prejudice, the pressure of immediate want, the necessary grasping at the bird in the hand, though a whole covey may lie hidden in the bush, have decided most men and women in the choice of their employment, since the world was a world. It is so still, but in a modified degree. Education and the stir of the century are breaking up the old system of vegetative industry; and the theory of the economists will one day blossom into fact.

But leaving such extreme cases as those of Ronald and Dick, let us see how it fares with those who have—what the islesman and the South Saxon lack—schooling and leisure to think and read, and whose minds are not wholly absorbed in the need of providing for the morrow's sustenance. The great middle class, that elastic body which comprises in itself so many grades and ranks, is not at ease with respect to its social bargain. Mr Jones lies awake in the night-watches, anxiously pondering over the start

in life that he can afford his sons. Thomas can go into the office, perhaps, and John be articled to Vellum and Pounce, and wild Ned be shipped to Australia, but Alfred, his mother's darling, what is to be done with him? Mrs Jones wishes to see him a clergyman, but the father feels dubious on the subject, and flinches from the notion of college expenses and a prospective curacy.

What Mr Jones feels is experienced by many and many fathers anxious for their sons' sake, and by many thoughtful youths, gazing with wistful hope on the impenetrable curtain of the future. Mothers, it is true, are usually more sanguine. It is an absurd but a touching sight, that of Mrs Robinson, in the midst of her curly-headed darlings, weaving the web of their future destiny like an amiable Valkyr. Arthur shall be a bishop, nay, archbishop of Canterbury; James, wiser than his brethren—she sees the Lord Chancellor's wig already crowning his baby head; sprightly Harry shall wear scarlet and gold, and be a general one day; and as for little Edwin, who already shews a precocious genius for healing, evinced by his administering bread-pills to the cat, he shall be a great physician. Heigh-ho! how many such fond mothers are there even now busy in bespeaking the chief prizes of life for their offspring, and how few of these air-built ships will ever come safe to land!

Some men find their career as ready made to hand as those of the poorest and least instructed workers, only that their path is smooth and rose-bestrewed. Lord Adolphus yonder was born a statesman—of a certain sort. Before he left the nursery, he knew what bright destiny awaited him. His reverend tutor never forgot to impress upon him that he was one day to govern his countrymen; and when he left Oxford, and returned from the grand tour, he budded into parliamentary and official life as naturally as Barney the Irish labourer took to hod and ladder. So young Mr Midas, even in his teens, was quite at home in the bank parlour, and has steadily addressed himself through life to fill the square-toed shoes of his gold-compelling father.

Most of us, however, must choose, not freely, perhaps, but warped and biased by circumstances and early notions, what line we will adopt. In former days, almost every family possessed one boy, at least, self-devoted to Neptune. Tom would go to sea, in spite of all that his sisters could urge, in spite of

papa's reluctance and his mother's tears. Salt-water literature, Marryat's novels, Nelson's Life, Cook's Voyages, and certain wild legends of piratical rovers, were generally to blame for this sea-going mania, coupled with the natural longing of a lively lad to see the world and seek adventure. But in this selection there was small hankering after profit. The naval officer does not now return, like Drake or Raleigh, laden with spoil. A little prize-money is yet picked up on the coast of Africa, where luck and skill combine to help the cruising captain, but the value of a taken slave-ship is slight when compared with the booty won in elder days.

The oldest of employments, agriculture, is by no means the easiest, at least in our crowded Europe. Any hardworking, sober person can conjure a livelihood out of the virgin soil of Australia, where successive crops of giant wheat reward the tillage of the deep black mould; and in America there has hitherto been no lack of good corn-land to bring under the plough or hoe. But to farm in England or France at a profit is not quite so simple; and we are in a transition state, with the rare advantage of seeing the old-fashioned agriculturist, soon to be as extinct as the mammoths, side by side with the educated capitalist who is replacing him.

Look at Farmer Turniptop, a man for whom I confess a sort of friendly regret, though I know that his doom is registered, and that he must go where many a defunct British institution has gone. Sturdy, slow, and rather obstinate, is Mr Turniptop, a hater of innovations, whatsoever they be. He does not like machinery, nor steam-power, nor improved breeds of cattle, nor the theories of bookish men. His aspirations are all for the good old times of the French war, when bread was a shilling a quarter, and ale a shilling a quart, and wheat and barley sold at fancy prices. Somehow, though corn and cattle sell well, Mr Turniptop has a distressing consciousness that his nose is being put out of joint, so to speak, by his wealthy supplanter Newcome.

A shrewd man and a scientific is Newcome, one who has steadily brought capital to bear upon the land, who knows all about the rotation of crops, all about deep drainage, composts, dressing, drilling, short-horns, and Italian rye-grass. He can modify and transmute sheep, pigs, and oxen with a skill that savours of jugglery, analyses the soil as daintily as if the loam and marl contained gold, and can call turnips and mangel-wurzel by their Latin names. He has the best machinery, the best horses that money can buy, never grudges an outlay that promises a fair return, and frightens all Arcadia with the roaring of the steam-engines that do his winnowing and thrashing, his haymaking and haypressing, like ugly iron brownies more potent than men.

Newcome, rich from the first, grows rapidly richer, and merits his success. He is rather a contradiction to the received rural theories. To be sure, his men are better paid and more contented than Turniptop's, his by-roads better kept, his rent paid as punctually as Bank of England dividends. But his landlord is a little afraid of the well-to-do tenant, whose farm is as big as a small estate, who will insist on a long lease before he buries his money in the land, who must have a reserve of shooting, and whose bargain is a purely commercial one, with no question of feudal attachment or sympathy. As for coercing Mr Newcome's vote when election-time comes round, the squire can no more do it than the lord of a London manor can put the screw on his tenantry. There is no obligation, no sentiment, nothing but a fair pennyworth for a ready penny.

We cannot all be Newcomes. A whole library of works on tillage, from Tusser or Poor Richard to Mr Hoskyns's wise and clever little volume, *Talpa*; or *Chronicles of a Clay Farm*, cannot teach practical farming, and even Turniptop's rough traditions

are better than the dreams of Professor Flightie. Newcome has both practice and theory to help him, being usually the educated son of some farmer of more sense and forethought than his compere. But how fares it in general with the townsman, the retired naval officer, the captain who sells his commission in the Royal Plungers, marries Miss Jane, and takes a farm? Poor man, poor man! At the very best, as Sir Walter puts it, 'the carles and the cart avers make it a', and the carles and the cart avers eat it a'. Things work round in a circle. But more usually there is a balance on the wrong side of the account at the year's end. Even if you be sensible, active, and able to govern, your men will not work as well for you as for Turniptop, to the matter born. You are not early enough, you really do not know how much work can be fairly expected from horse or man, and make woful blunders about fodder and seed-corn, until the veriest clown on the land jeers at your ignorance. Then you gradually get to place more and more confidence in your bailiff or foreman, some rustic more long-headed and smooth-tongued than the rest, and your deficits grow and grow till your patience wears out, and so ends your amateur farming. There are people, town-bred, who can buy a tiny property, some very few acres, and actually make money thereof; but it must be an especial hobby, and those who ride it, wise and prudent beyond the average; while even their small profit is sure to be drawn from pigs and poultry, apples and roots, rather than from grain or sheep.

The most profitable crops are of a comparatively eccentric character, such as madder and poppies, lavender, canary-seed, roses, strawberries, and so forth, all of which only answer in particular localities. So with wood, turnip-seed, and other harvests liable to peculiar risks, but capable of yielding great profits. Hops and flax, again, are most valuable crops; although the growth of the first is a lottery, and that of the second exhaustive and difficult. Market-gardening, near a great city, is a well-paid investment of trouble and cost, in spite of the havoc which a hailstorm or blight sometimes occasions; and few properties can vie with an osier-bed, fast-rooted on the aits or banks of some friendly river, and bringing in a safe rental that fills upland proprietors with wonder and envy.

Well-managed woods should prove a steady source of revenue, fir-timber in especial, where the soil serves and water-carriage is at hand, should repay planting with six per cent. on the outlay; whereas pasture and arable land are estimated, on a fair average of the United Kingdom, to yield but three per cent. in the way of rental. One great advantage the south of Europe possesses over the north, in climates favouring the vegetation which cannot endure our keener air and darker sky. The vine, olive, and mulberry, banked up, terrace over terrace, bestow on Provence and Italy their bounteous harvests of silk, oil, and wine. In these countries, a vein of wealth seems to pervade the land, and the gains of the husbandman, in good years, contrast forcibly with the yield of the same amount of acreage elsewhere.

The sensible Dutchman has found out how to turn a marsh into a gold mine. Thanks to his unwearied toil, the emerald meadows of the Netherlands pasture the best milch kine in Europe. No cows like Dutch cows, no grazing like theirs, no butter so good as that which is deftly made in Dutch churns, in the spotless, speckless dairies of Holland. They supply Germany, England, and Northern France. The 'Ostend butter' of the sea-coast, the 'London butter' which fetches so high a price in country towns, the firmest and most wholesome in all markets, comes originally from Damme or Flushing, and the value of a Dutch dairy-farm is counted by the square yard.

Mining is a dubious investment. It has always had great temptations. Men point to Cressus, suddenly enriched by coal or iron, and now buying up estates

as a school-boy buys tarts, and their mouths water for similar success. But the gnomes that reign below are not equally kind to all explorers, as mining captains and surveyors know but too well. For one man who has founded a family, and earned honours by these means, twenty have lost all. Lead, tin, copper, have ruined more fair fortunes, certainly, than coal or iron, but they must yield the palm to silver, and yet more to gold. Until California and Australia began to pour their fountains of gold-dust into the lap of Europe, there existed an almost superstitious fear of a gold-mine among prudent folks. It was held, and not unwisely, that the best thing the finder could do was to shut it up and run away from the temptation; for the precious metals had a dreadful habit of taking sudden dips, down, deep down, through the hard igneous rocks, and the rich vein abruptly shrivelled to nothing, or sank away like a pantomimic imp through a trap-door, and could only be followed at an expense that would have beggared Rothschild. It may be briefly said of mines, that they answer well in the hands of rich men, who can afford to wait and to lose, and who have the self-command to stop when the run of luck is adverse, but that Wheal Poldyddlum shares make but a haphazard investment for a poor man's slender venture.

The liberal professions, so called, leave the widest margin between actual starvation and a plethora of wealth. The bar, for example, gives a competence to comparatively few of those entitled to wear forensic horsehair, and riches to only a select band. To be sure, there are great prizes in the career, and we may, if we choose, shut our eyes altogether to those who have drawn blanks. When Sir Sampson Borem, as we all know, was made Chancellor, he was asked to accept a heavy loss, in a strict pounds, shillings, and pence view. For years, his fees had averaged twenty thousand pounds. There is Lord Cramham, too, and Baron Beetlebrow, who are quite poor men in comparison with their former selves. But the bar is no El Dorado to men of middling abilities; and a great deal of severe grinding is necessary to insure even a maintenance. To be sure, local interest often goes almost as far as talent. There are generally in each circuit one or two young gentlemen on whom briefs rain quite thickly. In London, these aspirants are neglected and unknown, but on the Midland Circuit, the Northern, the Western, their clerks are perpetually pouching retainers; and plaintiff and defendant vie in struggling for the aid of native genius, of the Warwick man, the Carlisle man, the son of Squire Applecroft of Crediton, or of Dr Leech, the respected Heavtree physician.

The loaves and fishes of the church are even more unequally distributed. A barrister's difficulty is to get work. Once employed, his labour is never gratuitous, whereas a curate may be worked well-nigh to death for very slender emoluments; and many small livings are even leaner than curacies. It may be safely said that he who takes orders with no higher views than those which refer to profit, makes but a bad bargain, unless, indeed, he be a giant of learning, a bishop's relative by blood or marriage, or tutor to the son of some very great man indeed.

Physic is not a liberal patroness, and gives little more than bread to most of her votaries. Sir Balaam, no doubt, finds the spray of Hygieia's fountain turn to golden drops for him. It is curious to watch the good man as his well-appointed carriage whirls him from one stately door to another, and to compute the value of his time. They say that he has a habit of tossing his paper-wrapped fees on to the soft white rug at the bottom of his trim brougham, and sitting, so to speak, with his feet in a bath of guineas. But there are few doctors so fortunate as Sir Balaam, and the majority of the men of healing live by their art, and no more.

It is a popular belief that lawyers—the solicitor, the attorney, the legal agent—are very rich. They are supposed to absorb the oyster for which angry litigants are fighting, and they certainly have a finger in every pie that comes hot from the bakehouse of Themis. Yet, for one wealthy lawyer there are ten poor ones; and the classic attorney, the bloodsucker of fiction, is seldom seen out of the pages of a novel.

A great deal of money is made—and lost—by the regular frequenters of the money-market, those who make it their business in life to speculate on the rise and fall of public and private securities, and who are familiarly called stock-jobbers. This is a profession in itself, and needs its special training, aptitude, and practice. Amateurs almost always burn their fingers when they meddle with it. Even the oldest gambler of this speculative class may be ruined often enough, in spite of all his care. The rise or fall of an eighth per cent. sometimes crushes the wretch who has staked everything on a time-bargain; and as for the great panics, each of them does more mischief than the car of Juggernaut.

Money-lenders are not held in high esteem, and do not always earn enough solid pudding to indemnify them for so much dispraise. Their profits and risks are both very considerable, and they lose heavily if they gain much. Perhaps the smaller fry of usurers fatten better than the leviathans who deal with Sir Harry and my lord. This is certainly the case among the French. Considerable fortunes are amassed in Paris by the system of loans established at the Halles. The market-women and basket-men who vend fish, fruit, vegetables, and flowers in the great city, are not a thrifty race, and Paris is a costly place of residence, full of temptations to extravagance. It follows that Madeleine, and Jacques, and Mère Margot are *au sec* when the early morning dawns, and the salesmen are ready to supply the retailers. Ah, but here comes a friend in need, a flat-capped, brown-jacketed man, a finished scholar in Parisian slang, learned in gossip and scandal, and knowing the characters of his customers to perfection. There stand Madeleine, Jacques, and Mère Margot, fasting and anxious, basket in hand, but with empty pockets. Jacques is a *Fort de la Halle*, a stout porter, the two women are *revendeuses*, one of fish, one of fruit. Jacques is a *bon enfant*, a little noisy in his cups, rather quarrelsome, but honest, and Madeleine is a well-meaning virago of the fish-market. As for Mère Margot, she may be a little slippery of disposition, what Flatcap calls *louché*, but he knows her, and can manage her by means of allusions to a certain financial transaction of last year, which she would not like to reach the ears of the correctional police. Flatcap lends the three retailers a glittering five-franc piece each of them, but not for long. They rush to the salesmen, purchase their stock-in-trade, fish, fruit, haricots, what you will; and all day long they wrangle and scold, wheedle, bully, and argue, until the goods are sold. Madeleine comes back at evening with ten francs, Mère Margot with eight francs fifteen sous, Jacques with eleven francs, to the pillar in the market where Flatcap gives them rendezvous. There, they settle their accounts. Flatcap's finance is beautiful in its simplicity. He receives back his principal, his five-franc piece, and half a franc for interest. The rest serves to nourish and reward the fish and fruit sellers, and they revel it away in careless fashion; and next morning the borrowing is renewed. Half a franc a day—ten per cent. *per day* on an advance of money! Harpagon himself might be content with that; and there are many Flatcaps in the pay of M. Levi, the capitalist in the background; and each of these jackals to a lending lion has scores of Madeleines and Jacqueses upon his list, and hardly ever loses a centime of the sums he doles out among them, so accurate is his knowledge of the class.

Probably a half of the business which in London supplies literature to a craving public, is carried on upon a system of usury. Twelmoe has little or no capital, but he has contrived to bring out a few small popular books, and to get one or two periodicals into existence, and seems likely to make them profitable, and a stationer supplies him with paper on credit, and even discounts for him an occasional bill. Sufficiently embarrassed with the speculations on hand, he yet rushes on to others, in the hope of some one of them proving such a splendid and sudden success as to relieve him from all difficulties. His difficulties only go on increasing. To obtain credit, and keep his trade going, he has to mortgage such of his publications as are considered worth anything, always to the last pound that can be raised upon them. His paper-merchant acquires a greater and greater hold upon him. A great deal of ingenuity, industry, and even it may be self-denial, are exercised by the victim in the conducting of his business; but the difference between paper (his cardinal material) at fair ready-money prices, and at the prices necessarily charged to so riskful a customer as he, is ruinous, and after a few years of his life, utterly misspent as far as his own true interests are concerned, he closes with obligations to a startling amount, against which there stand but a few copyrights, the speculative value of which is probably more than fully absorbed by the mortgages. Poor Twelmoe has probably meant well all along, and, perhaps, if he had not had to look to others for his capital, he might have realised tolerable gains. But, in reality, all gain was drained off by those to whom he was indebted. 'Vos-non-vobis' might have been inscribed over his door as justly as it might be over the cow-house, the bee-house, or the bird's nest.

It is a melancholy fact that some of the most reprehensible trades are also the most profitable. The African slave-trade, for instance, still is what smuggling was, a mine of ill-gotten gain. But for its profits, for the value of human flesh when landed alive in Cuba, none could be found to face danger, a deadly climate, and the loathing of honest men. But one day the market will be shut, and the trade will stop, and the accursed gain stop with it.

If an examination into profit and loss proves anything, it is that the race is not to the swift, but to the steady. Your great banker, your mighty manufacturer, is not often a person of brilliant qualities, but he has generally the weighty qualifications of prudence, firmness, and patient industry. The hare is conquered by the tortoise everywhere over the broad race-course of the commercial world.

CONCERNING BEARDS.

YOUNG men of the present day are for ever fondling and caressing that soft downy substance, which they one day hope to designate by the name of beard and whiskers. There was a time, however, not merely in our own country (where beards have only become general since the Crimean campaign), but even amongst the refined nations of the continent, when a smooth chin was the fashion, as in the reign of Louis XIII. of France. Endless, indeed, have been the changes in the manly growth that fringes the human chin, not only among different nations, but even among the same people at different eras: at one time it has been trimmed so as to be diagnostic of an individual creed or class, and at others it has been enlarged, shorn, or docked entirely, at the caprice of an emperor.

Pictures of the priests and fathers of the early days of the Christian era, delineate the face as furnished with a long flowing uncut beard, an appendage con-

sidered to add much to the gravity and sanctity of the wearer. There were not wanting, however, exceptions to this rule; men who conceived that it was wrong to wear such flowing beards, since beneath the gray hairs might lurk the contemptuous curl of the lip, and who consequently shaved clean.

This difference as to beard or no beard eventually became a matter of dispute between the Roman and Greek churches, the former of whom have a set of statutes regulating the size of the tonsure, and the shaving of the face, and with whom it was customary to consecrate to God the first clippings from the chin. On the other hand, the Greeks looked with abhorrence on the images of Roman saints without beards, regarding the latter ornament as indicative of extreme sanctity.

If such a trivial difference as the wearing or shaving of the beard bred so much strife and jealousy between the two great churches of the early ages, can we wonder that the uncivilised hordes of Tartary waged a long and deadly war with the Persians, on no other grounds than that the latter would not trim their whiskers after the Tartar fashion; and though one on every other article of faith, esteemed them as heretics and infidels solely for this breach of ecclesiastical observance? The Turk, too, who preserves his beard with the utmost scrupulousness, so much so as carefully to gather up every hair that is combed or falls out during his lifetime, for the purpose of having them interred along with his body, looks upon the Persian who shaves his upper lip, and clips his beard, as a dog of an unbeliever; and the Arab who believes in his Koran, and the promises of the Prophet, would shrink from the idea of allowing a razor to touch his face, for, says he, Mohammed never shaved.

Plutarch mentions an old Laconian who suffered his white beard to grow most luxuriously, and being asked the reason, replied: 'In order that having my white beard continually in view, I may do nothing unworthy of its whiteness.' This reminds us of a regard for the same object manifested in later days by the famous chancellor, Sir Thomas More. Being on the scaffold about to suffer death for his implication in some court intrigue, he, as he placed his neck upon the block, carefully lifted his beard out of the way of the executioner's axe, saying: 'My beard, at least, has committed no treason, and should not suffer punishment.'

Few can fail to recall the praise with which Homer dwells on the white snowy beard of Nestor, which doubtless added weight to the opinions given by this aged sage to the Grecian chiefs. This noble ornament of the human face, which certainly adds much to the classic beauty of the Grecian statues, continued as an institution among that people till the time of Alexander the Great, who, considering that a Greek's beard, like a Chinaman's tail, might prove only too available a handle for his foe in the claps of battle, ordered all these appendages to be docked, exactly on the same principle that a terrier or bull-dog has its ears cut short.

In the early days of the Roman empire, the use of the razor was unknown; nor was it till the example was set by the emperors that the custom became general. We read that Nero consecrated the first shavings of his chin to Jupiter Capitolinus, and as in the presentation of the freedom of a city, enclosed it in a gold box set with pearls. It was common, too, among this people, to make the day when first a youngster was shaven one of ceremony and feasting, and to further enhance the occasion by having it done by some one higher in rank than themselves, who became afterwards the adopted father of the individual

whose chin he had lathered and scraped. Can there be a more striking illustration of the difference produced in the physiognomy of a people by the cultivation or absence of the beard, than by a glance at the Ninevite excavations, and the Egyptian paintings? The former are represented with magnificent flowing beards, sometimes plated, or curled, or interwoven with gold thread; the latter have only a miserable tuft hanging from the end of the chin. The Jewish Lawgiver forbade the Israelites to cultivate their beards after the Egyptian fashion; and though, like many other Eastern nations, they wore no hair on the upper lip, still they allowed their whiskers to grow in a narrow strip from the ear to the chin, hanging down from which, the beard assumed that forked pendant form represented in some of the old pictures of the rabbis.

Who ever saw a Chinaman with a beard or whiskers? Of the many myriads of Celestials we have met with, we cannot recall one who boasted even the vestige of a sprout. Nature, indeed, seems to have denied the Chinaman a hairy covering, and he, on his part, instead of cultivating what little he has of it in front as the outer barbarians do, devotes all his attention to the crop behind, till it grows into a stout long tail.

Like many less civilised races, as those of the west coast of Africa, the Chinaman often measures the abilities of a European by the length of his beard; and we can remember the advice of a seafaring man to a friend of ours about to sail for the Flowery Land, 'Let your beard grow; otherwise they will think nothing of you.'

It cannot be denied that a certain superiority has always been conveyed by the presence of the beard. Among the Turks, slaves are generally shaved, in order to mark their inferior position; nor can you subject a Turk to a greater indignity than to cut off his beard. In like manner, the attendants in the harem, who are in servitude at the will of the sultan, are all shaved; nor are they permitted to grow their beard till the royal mandate sets them at liberty. A similar value seems to have been placed upon this appendage by the kings and nobility of the first dynasties in France, many of whom were in the habit of cultivating their beard after the Ninevite fashion, and interweaving it with gold threads. Only men of rank were allowed to cultivate so distinguishing a badge of honour; and as the possession of it was esteemed an indication of nobility and freedom, so the loss of it was imposed as a mark of inferiority on all bondsmen.

The public press has amused itself lately at the expense of Mr Chase, who, in his endeavour to raise a revenue sufficient to meet the enormous expenditure of the Federal government of America, has taxed almost every article of food, clothing, &c.; but nowhere do we read of a tax on beards. Yet Peter the Great—that despotic autocrat of all the Russias—once issued a decree ordering all men to be shaved, when those who could afford it, rather than be deprived of their beards, paid largely for the retention of them, whilst those who could not, treasured up the shorn remnants, and had them buried with them in their coffin.

When moustaches and beard became the rage in England a few years ago, and young men who could not grow the genuine articles mounted false ones, it was jokingly said that government had issued an order that officials should put off their moustaches during office-hours; but the Norman Conqueror went further than that, and to spite his Anglo-Saxon subjects, ordered them all to shave their faces—a decree so repugnant that, rather than execute it, many of them left the country.

Most of our Gothic ancestors shaved, or wore hair merely on the upper lip; but the Lombards who invaded Italy wore remarkably long beards, and

hence derived their name of Longobards, or Long Beards.

It was the custom in the middle ages for the sovereign to add greater sanction when sealing his mandates, by embedding three hairs from his beard in the wax; and there is still extant a charter of 1121 containing the following words: 'Quod ut ratum et stabile perseveret in posterum, presentis scripto sigilli mei robur apposui cum tribus pilis barbe mee.' But the most remarkable use to which we have ever read of the beard being put, occurs in Portuguese history, where John de Castro, being short of provisions for his fleet, pledges one of his whiskers to the people of Goa as a security for the repayment of a sum of money, a sacrifice which the gallantry of the ladies of Goa would not permit; but relying on his known honour, they raised the amount, and without demanding so valuable a hostage, begged him to keep both it and the required sum.

The beard continued to be the fashion in France till the days of Henry IV., on whose death the accession of a youthful and beardless sovereign was a silent hint to the courtiers around the throne to shave their faces, and assimilate their appearance to his majesty's. One nobleman, however, the Duke de Sully, who had been high in favour with the father, retained the ancient beard even at the court of his son Louis XIII.; and when made a jest of by the obsequious and smooth-faced courtiers, used to remark to his sovereign, 'Sir, when your father of honoured memory did me the favour to consult my opinion, he usually sent away first the court buffoons.' A similar instance of the fickleness of human fashion occurred in the days of Philip V. of Spain, whose ancestors, like all true Spaniards, had devoted much attention to the trimming and cultivation of their beards. This monarch ascending the throne with a shaved chin, his ministers and courtiers immediately followed suit, and the people in turn imitated their example. This fashion, however, was so little congenial to their minds, that it gave rise to the proverb, 'Since we have lost our beards, we have lost our souls.'

In times of mourning, the beard was made to signify the intensity of sorrow of the wearer, either by being allowed to grow neglected, or by being plucked off. This was the custom among the ancient Jews, and is so now among the modern Japanese, who go unshorn forty days.

The more we read upon the subject, the more do we feel that a certain idea of superiority and respect have always been attached to the beard and whiskers. In the early days of France, the suppliants suing for protection and mercy deemed themselves secure of success if they could touch or cut off a portion of the beard of the individual to whom they appealed; so in later days, in the times of the Grand Monarque, a lady knew no surer road to the heart of her lover than by praising the beauty of his whiskers.

Among certain nations in the East, friends salute each other, not by shaking hands as we do, but by kissing each other's beards; and wives tender their devotion, children their affection, by kissing their husbands' and fathers' beards. The Turk, whose beard seems always associated in our mind with that of Bluebeard, considers it one of the first acts of courtesy due from himself to his guests, to throw sweet scents upon their beards.

We can most of us recall to mind how, after the present Emperor of the French ascended the throne, and cultivated that very peculiar long-drawn-out moustache, and after Victor Emmanuel visited us in 1851, and displayed his equally characteristic wavy broad band on the upper lip, innumerable imitations followed among the fast young men of our own cities; but the ladies of the present day will probably be surprised to hear that the fair sex too were once emulous of these bristly ornaments. The Lombard women cultivated their hair to resemble a beard, in order that

they might accompany their husbands to battle; and French ladies a century back dressed their hair in such a manner, that curls hung down their cheeks as far as their bosoms, and went by the name of whiskers.

FEMALE FELONS.

THERE is no human being in this country so prominently brought before his fellow-creatures as the criminal, from the moment that his heinous offence against society is committed, to that wherein the judge pronounces his sentence of penal servitude. There is no newspaper that can afford to refuse the publication of his exploits, and there are not a few which mainly derive their popularity from the materials furnished by himself and friends. On the other hand, there is nobody who is so instantaneously and completely lost sight of as the felon after condemnation. In some of our courts of justice, there is a trap-door in the dock itself, with a steep ladder leading downwards, I know not whither; but as soon as the last words of penal doom have been uttered, that trap is lifted, and the felon descends, to be no more seen of men for years to come. Not more suddenly is he thus withdrawn from our physical eyes than from our mental vision. Another wretch at once monopolises his place in our minds as in the dock he has just quitted. We know not, and we do not care to inquire, whither he is gone. Even the sombre piles which receive such men—the very prisons themselves—have a faculty of getting out of sight. For every hundred of us who has seen the Houses of Parliament, there are not five who have set eyes on gloomy Millbank, not a mile to southward of them, and certainly not wanting in magnitude. Many prisons, too, are purposely erected as far as possible from the abodes of free men, on peninsulas jutting out to sea, or on desolate barren moors. Of the daily lives of the men immured in these places, we hear nothing, save when some terrible *emeute* takes place within them, and the devil shakes his chain with hideous clamour. Of felon men, I say, we know but little; and of felon women, nothing. The philanthropist, the statistician, and the magazine-writer, could obtain permission without much difficulty to visit their brethren in affliction, whenever they were so minded; but to be admitted into the precincts devoted to the fair sex, it was necessary to get an order from the secretary of state. To have female life in prison described by a prison matron* is, therefore, to have quite a new door opened in the social fabric.

Let us enter. We shall see sights sad and strange, and even what some people (who are more fond of holding up their hands in horror than in helping folks in difficulties) call 'shocking;' but the experience may be beneficial, nevertheless. The prison matron has given us a photograph, and not a pretty picture, of penal life; a lady who is worked fourteen hours a day—and such work!—as she remarks with more truth than elegance of style—has not much time for sentimentalities. She is given to be rather hard upon tender murderesses, and impressible kleptomaniacs, and even to consider them (as one of her charges used to express it) 'rubbish.' A romantic prison matron would indeed be about as much out of place as a flower in a dog-kennel. She could not exist in it a day, and certainly not a night—pacing the dimly-lighted wards, and listening for a breath or murmur that may be significant of one ill at ease within the cells; checking at times artful signals on the wall between one prisoner and another; or pausing, perhaps for company's sake, to whisper a "good-night" to some one

as sleepless as herself; passing in due course to the "dark cells," away from the general prison, and looking in to make sure that the woman who has been carried there for breaking her windows, or tearing her blankets, or assaulting her officer, is quite safe; listening perhaps to the wild snatches of song that well thence, and may personify the screeching of some demon, vindictive and defiant, and with no claim upon humanity—striving, perhaps, to reason with her, and being sworn at for her pains; or, possibly, just possibly, if she be a favourite of the woman's, persuading her to be silent, and to try to sleep. And so, from night till morning, to and fro, to and fro, like a restless spirit, rendered restless by the shadows of crime that may haunt such places at such hours, wanders the matron, till the daylight filters through the windows.

So terrible, indeed, is our matron's occupation, that she becomes in a manner unsexed, and entertains a certain grim humour, by way of comfort, just after the fashion of a man. Wherever good-feeling permits her to do so, she suffers her narrative to take a tinge of drollery, which greatly relieves its horror.

The very first sacrifice that a female prisoner has to make at the shrine of justice is that of her hair, and this she objects to very much. 'Women whose hearts have not quailed, perhaps, at the murder of their infants, or the poisoning of their husbands, clasp their hands in horror at this sacrifice of their natural adornment—weep, beg, pray, occasionally assume a defiant attitude, resist to the last, and are finally overcome only by force. It is one of the most painful tasks of the prison this hair-cutting operation—moreover, it is, in my own opinion at least, a test of character. One woman will be resigned to her fate on the instant, and, with a Socratic stoicism, will compress her lips, submit herself to the shears, and march away to her bath afterwards in a business-like manner. A second will have a shivering fit over it, a third will weep passionately, and a fourth will pray to be spared the indignity, and implore the matron, on her knees, to go to the lady-superintendent, and state her case for her. Some women are impressed with the idea that coaxing will go a long way towards softening the matron's heart, or at least obtain some relaxation of the rule, and permission to retain a greater length of hair on their heads; consequently they bestow many "my dears" and "God bless you's" on the operator.

'The greatest trouble in my experience of prison-life was with an old woman of sixty years of age, and with about the same number of gray hairs on her head. She was an old prison-bird—had spent two-thirds of her life in confinement, and was as vain of her personal appearance as any girl of seventeen.

"No, Miss B.," she said to the operator, after catching sight of the scissors, and drawing herself up with the haughtiness of a duchess; "not this time, if you please, Miss B., it can't be done."

'But Miss B. replied it could be done, and was absolutely necessary to be done before the prisoner left the room.

"Things have altered a little, Miss B., since I saw you last, I can assure you. You've no power to touch a hair of my head, mum."

"How's that?"

"If you please, mum, I'm married;" and the old woman regarded the matron with significant triumph.

"And what's that to do with it? sit down—you really must sit down."

"What's that to do with it!" shrieked the old woman indignantly; "why, it's my husband's hair now, and you daren't touch it, according to law. It belongs to my husband, not to me, and you've no right to touch it—Lord bless you, the Queen of England daren't lay a finger on it now!"

* *Female Life in Prison.* By a Prison Matron. Hurst and Blackett.

These mistaken views—which are precisely the same sort of errors which, according to the *Saturday Review*, pervade all legal novels—are very prevalent among female criminals. They are constantly invoking the aid of that Justice which they have outraged, upon the most frivolous pretences. They demand to see the governor; he knows the law of England, of course; they will make a full statement to the directors on the next board meeting, and please put their names down with that object in view, at once. Such an infamous violation of the laws of their native land they have never yet been witness to. They consider that the ceremony of marriage (about which they have less orthodox views in other respects) has something of the power of absolutism in it; and when a lady is brought back to her old quarters at Millbank or Brixton, she is anxious to inform everybody of her having married since her last incarceration, while ‘the husband, more often than otherwise, is alleged to be in the army—probably out of compliment to the military character of the governor and his deputy.’ Many of these ladies are physically competent to enter the profession of arms themselves, and at once give battle to the hair-cutter. Here is a picture of such an Amazon: ‘She was a tall, powerful woman, with the face of a tigress and the limbs of an athlete, and one glance was sufficient to convince the matrons in attendance that it was beyond their power to master her. On such occasions, the guards on duty in the outer yards, or in the men’s prison, are summoned to put the handcuffs on, while the necessary ceremony is gone through. In this case it required three men to secure her wrist, whilst her hair was cut the requisite length, she struggling and cursing, and swearing long after the operation was over—even when she was in her refractory cell, while the gas was burning feebly in the wards, the matron on night-duty gliding noiselessly along the passages, and the clock in the yard chiming the early hours of morning.’ The female hair is the subject of incessant anxiety to its proprietress, even in a prison where there is nobody (male) to look at it. ‘Seeing the doctor’ is a privilege of which they avail themselves in large numbers, and very often solely to obtain his professional advice respecting their capillary attractions. ‘Will you be so good, sir, as to give me something to keep my hair from a-coming off? It ain’t half as thick as it used to be, and I shall go out bald, sir, if you don’t do something. It’s a-coming out in handfuls.’ Or: ‘If you please, sir, I’m sorry to say that I found some gray hairs in my head last night. It never happened before, sir. It’s all this dreadful prison that’s turning me gray.’

Vanity is the last weakness to abandon the female breast, nor is it found wise altogether to prevent its demonstration, since, in some of the cases recorded by our authoress, it is not too much to say that it is the sole link that connects the Woman with the Human. Many female prisoners make use of the whitening of their walls to give a clearer appearance to their complexion. They draw out the red threads from the cotton shirts they have to make, or from their aprons, and having soaked them in water, transfer the colouring matter to their cheeks by way of rouge. They appropriate the ropes of their hammocks to serve as crinoline, or transform their sheets into full petticoats. One very uproarious young lady, who was always in the penal-class cell—when not in the ‘dark’ cell—withdrew the wires in front of the windows thereof, and made them serve as a substitute for ‘boning’—to stiffen her stays. As she only detached them here and there, the misappropriation would not have been discovered had not the ingenious fair one fainted away in chapel one morning, a victim to this extra tight-lacing.

Among the ladies at Millbank and Brixton there is an incessant and piteous appeal for hair-pins; but a stony-hearted government will make no

provision for this want, remarking that ‘string will do.’ ‘Bless your handsome face, how charming you are looking this morning, miss,’ observed one fair flatterer to our matron; ‘there’s a kind of colour on your cheeks that just sets you off like. My dear good soul,’ with a sudden drop of her voice to a hasty whisper, ‘have you got such a thing as a hair-pin to spare?’ Pieces of glass are quite as much in request as with a tribe of savages. ‘A woman will break a window for a piece of glass, secure the largest piece in her bed, and mourn over the seeming accident with a display of feeling verging on the histrionic. This accident is often excused, and the cell searched for all the pieces. As a rule, despite the most rigid scrutiny, the woman contrives to conceal one piece. With a background to her glass—a black piece of cloth filched from her work, or the smoke from the gas or candle in her cell—she contrives an apology for a looking-glass, and guards her treasure with zealous care. The possession of a trifle of this kind will often keep the worst woman patient for many weeks—the confiscation thereof will transform her into a fury.’ A threat to substitute white night-caps for the not very modish head-dresses at present in vogue at Millbank, ‘convulsed the prisoners with horror,’ says our authoress, who is by no means given to exaggerated expressions. ‘I remember once passing a cell,’ says she, ‘the outer door of which had been left open one summer night by order of the doctor, when I was startled by the appearance at the iron grating of a figure in her night-dress—a poor, delicate woman who had turned from her bed to exchange a few words with me. I had a candlestick in my hand at the time, and was passing to my own room at the end of the ward. “Lord bless you, miss!” whined the woman; “I’m so glad to see you to-night; I’ve something on my mind.”

“You must not talk; you’ll disturb the other women.”

“I’ll only whisper it—if you won’t mind just a word, miss.”

“Just a word” is a great boon—an everlasting favour conferred—with the more grateful of this class, and I went nearer the grating to hear her statement. Beginning in a low, lachrymose vein, intended to arouse my sympathy and interest in her coming relation, she suddenly darted a long, naked arm through the grating, and hooked some of the melted tallow from the candle in my hand.

“It’s only just a scrap of tallow for my hair, miss,” said she, applying it to that treasured ornament very rapidly with both hands; “it do get awful rough without fat, to be sure! and I’m very much obliged to you, miss. God bless you!” And with a triumphant laugh at her own adroitness, she darted from the grating into her bed. These little ebullitions, which, in society without, would be considered almost indecorous, form the *agrément* of life at Brixton or Millbank—the incidents of good-humour and of favourable calm. The monotony of prison is so hideously irksome, that it produces in a vast number of female cases what are called ‘breakings out’—not escapes, but escape-valves. Even the quietest natures desire some sort of relief from the invariable routine. ‘I assure you, miss,’ observed one somewhat impulsive matron to our authoress, ‘that when I hear the glass shattering and the women screaming, my temples throb, my ears tingle, and I want to break something—dreadfully.’ There is the fun of the outbreak, and there is the laudable notion of retaliating upon the arm of the law. ‘I’ll serve ‘em out for putting me in here,’ is often the remark with which an act of wholesale damage is accompanied. The prison blankets used to be torn in such infinitesimal strips that sacking-sheets stitched with string were substituted. ‘The demolition of these being a trying ordeal for the finger-nails,

they answered well for a time, until one woman, more crafty than her fellow-prisoners, made a feint of destroying her dinner-can, and concealing one strip of the metal, which she sharpened during the night; with this murderous instrument she cut up the sacking with great exultation, and called attention to her success in the morning. Some of the boldest women even make attempts to set their cells on fire when the gas is lighted, and have so far succeeded as to have conceived great fear of being roasted alive before help arrived, and have therefore startled the whole prison with their clamours for release.

'The strength of some of these women during their fits of frenzy is greatly in excess of the men's. It always requires two, very often three, of the guards to force one fighting, plunging woman from her cell to the "dark;" tables and bedsteads snapping under their hands like splints of firewood. One woman, named M'Williams—a woman of small stature, but of extraordinary strength—succeeded one night at Brixton in wrenching the inner door of a dark cell completely off its hinges.' The lady's progress from her chamber to the place of punishment can be sometimes traced by shreds and patches of her own garments, by tufts of hair from the men's heads and whiskers, and by the buttons of their official uniform. One young person, who, besides great personal attractions, possessed the unusual advantage (for a female) of being an excellent boxer, was partial to 'climbing to her window-sill, sitting thereon, and passing her head, arms, and legs through the exterior iron bars. In this extraordinary and ridiculous position, Lennan would remain for a considerable time, refusing to change it, and expressing her satisfaction at the state of affairs in general.

"Don't trouble yourself about me, Miss —," she would say impudently in reply to the matron's remonstrance; "it's very comfortable up here, and one gets a mighty lot of fresh air, which the Lord knows is wanted. I ain't a-coming down these eight-and-forty hours."

"And Johannah Lennan kept to her position until it became necessary to send for the male officers. "Oh, here's the lads!" she would remark on their arrival, "as if I couldn't have been allowed up here a bit!"

"Are you coming down, Lennan?" was the gruff demand.

"Not if I can help it," was the response; "I mean to stick here as long as I can, my fine fellows!" And when she came away, it was with the frame of the window in her hands.

Another of our matron's young charges was very considerate upon the subject of 'breakings out.' She must have them, but she was ready to put them off to a convenient season. 'If you say it will put you out—that your head can't stand it—I'll wait a little while, miss.'

'It is sure to put me out.'

'Then I'll put it off. Just for a little while, you know.'

'Very well.'

'You'll tell me when your head can stand it a little better?' she would ask quite childishly, and, like a child, be appeased by a promise to that effect.

Sometimes, but not often, sheer wantonness rather than evil temper is the incentive to these extraordinary fits of energy. Our authoress gives us types of every class, and the pleasantest type of all is a dreadfully boisterous one of the name of Tib. She is not much worse than several school-boys of our acquaintance; but then if she only were a school-boy, poor girl!

'Her favourite amusement when proceeding to chapel was to tread on the heels of the woman preceding her, pull her hair or the back of her bonnet, thrust playfully a pin into any part of her person that might be handy for the purpose, and almost choke

herself with suppressed laughter at the indignation aroused. In chapel, it was a matter of impossibility to keep her decorous; she would shift uneasily in her seat, fidget with her feet, drop her hymn-book, whisper frequently to her neighbour, stand up at unreasonable periods, or struggle hard with the next woman, who, perhaps, had sought to bring her back to her seat by jerking at the skirt of her dress. Her power of grimace was something remarkable. Her facial contortions would convulse a whole ward with laughter.' When remonstrated with, she would be penitent for several minutes, and then have a good 'break out,' to indemnify herself for the unnatural calm. 'It's such a jolly breeze, miss,' she would say, exultingly, as she danced about her cell after breaking all her windows, smashing her table, strewing the floor with fragments of sheets, blankets, and rug, and winding up with an onslaught on her own personal apparel: 'have the men been sent for yet?' This lady once took a 'header' into the snow-bank that fringed the exercising-ground at Millbank, and disappeared for a moment altogether. Poor Tib! It is pleasanter to linger over her rough horse-play, than to think or write of matters contrasted with which these things are innocent frolics.

As a class, says our authoress, mournfully but quite decisively, these women are 'desperately wicked—deceitful, crafty, malicious, lewd, and void of common feeling.' A very bad woman at Millbank is a demon. No two lines, in the opinion of the prison matron, are more true to human nature than these:

For men at most differ as heaven and earth,

But women, worst and best, as heaven and hell.

The commonest wisdom of the world deserts them as well as all the virtues. The male prisoners are influenced by some amount of reason and forethought, but the female prisoner flies in the very face of prudence, and acts more like a mad creature than a rational human being. Very literally, she fears neither God nor man. Let a single type of this terrible class suffice. 'One woman, named Honor Matthews, the most desperate and abandoned of a desperate class, once refused to leave the "dark" when her time had expired, flung herself on the floor, and announced her intention to remain there. The "dark" suited her; she should "break out" directly she was put into her old cell, or attempt some one's life, threats which she swore to execute as soon as a favourable opportunity for committing either of these acts occurred. The woman's stay in the "dark" had been a long one, but there was no help for it, save to submit to her continuance there. She was one of the worst characters in the prison—unteachable, intractable, and malicious. The door of the dark cell closed upon her again, and day after day passed—even week after week—without any signs of her altering her determination. The usual prison food was given her each day—I am not quite certain that even extra food was not allowed—and every inducement urged to prevail upon her to return to her customary duties. The matron in attendance had a favourite little kitten, which was accustomed to follow her about the wards; and it chanced that, in opening the door to attend to this woman, the kitten concealed itself in the cell, and was locked up with the prisoner. This feline intruder would have been hailed as a welcome guest by most women under the same circumstances; but this prisoner had never shewn any affection for a living thing within the prison walls. The kitten was missed, and search made for it. The woman in the dark cell maintained she had seen nothing of it. "What made any one think she knew about the kitten?" The cell was opened, and the little animal found suffocated. "That's how I should like to serve the whole of you!" growled the heartless wretch.'

Cruelty to animals is, however, not a common feature even with the worst women. Mice and

sparrows are eagerly lured into the cells, to be made much of, and these effect considerable good with their hosts, so excellent is the exercise of kindness. Nor is even tender poetic feeling banished from the breasts of these unhappy women in all cases. Our matron was once looking, in the course of her duty, through the 'inspection' hole of a cell, and perceived the inmate 'with her elbows on the table, gazing on a common daisy, which she had plucked from the patch of grass during her rounds—one of those rude, repulsive, yet not wholly bad prisoners, from whom no display of sentiment was anticipated. Yet the wistful look of that woman at her stolen prize was a gleam of as true sentiment as ever breathed in a poet's lines. A painter might have made much of her position, and a philosopher might have moralised concerning it, for the woman wept at last, dropped her head down on the table between her hands, and shed her bitter tears silently and noiselessly. The prison daisy must have spoken of the old innocent times—of the fields she crossed once with old friends—perhaps of daisies like unto that before her, which were growing on her mother's grave. Six months afterwards, I saw that flower pressed between the leaves of her Bible—a little treasure I should not have had the heart to take away, had there been any laws of confiscation concerning daisies in "the books."

The desire for companionship is to some slight extent gratified among these poor creatures by the adoption of a prison 'pal,' but they can have no communication with her without getting into trouble, and the smuggling of a folded scrawl into her hand as they pass her in the passage, or the execution of a concerted piece with their fingers on the walls of their respective cells, is the extent of their friendly communion. In the prison infirmary, however, besides better diet and laxer discipline, there is society to be got, as well as that blessed thing we call 'a change'; and therefore to get placed on the sick-list is the Millbank heaven. The schemes for attaining this end are unceasing, and the women care not at what sacrifice it is gained. Self-mutilation, and wanton destruction of health, are considered as nothing in the struggle to reach the infirmary ward. 'A woman will coolly pound a piece of glass to powder, and bring on internal hæmorrhage, nay, often bring herself to the dark threshold of death's door, for the mere sake of the change. Bad hands, and arms, and feet will be studiously contrived by means of scissors, thimble, or a half-penny fastened to a wound; madness will be feigned, and stay-laces be twisted round the neck till respiration almost ceases.' They perform this feat with a piece of list, or string, or a rope from their beds—there is no keeping every implement of self-destruction from a woman—and standing on their pail, put their heads into a running noose fastened to iron work of the ventilator in the door, and then they give a kick to the pail, which sends the water streaming underneath the door, and alarms the matron—now and then not quite in time. With the less determined, tying a stay-lace round the neck, till the eyes nearly drop out of the head, and then waiting patiently for the arrival of the next comer, is quite a fashionable amusement. Pricking the gums with a needle to feign the spitting of blood, and soap-pills to give foaming at the mouth, occur, of course, to the meanest capacities; but some will grow so stark and stiff as to counterfeit death itself, and others will self-inflate themselves like the Nassau balloon. These last, when taken to the sick ward, will recover slowly, sit up for a day or two, and then take to their beds once more, and begin gradually to expand.

In the infirmary, of course, all sufferers, whether themselves the cause of their ailments or not, meet with every kindness. It is right to state, too, that the government exhibits, in other respects, a consideration and tenderness for these prison-

women that may well be called paternal. On the day of liberty, women who live in the country are conducted to the railway station, seen into the carriage by a prison matron, and their fare paid by government to the station nearest home; if they are residents in London, a matron accompanies them home, and with a few parting words leaves them with their friends. Alas, and what friends these often are! An entire chapter of these interesting volumes is devoted to describing the various kinds of prisoners' friends. These descriptions are admirably graphic, but we have only room for one short specimen, which is unhappily the most ordinary type. The interviews take place in the presence of a matron, who sits within a wire screen that runs between the visitor and the visitée. Let a husband and wife be meeting for the first time:

'Husband. Well, you've made a mess of it this time, Sue, by George!

Wife. So it seems.

Husband. All your own fault, you know.

Wife. Don't stand there telling lies, Joe. If it hadn't been for your blackguard goings on, I should never have come to this.

Husband. You did it all yourself—you know you did. What do you want to make this lady (*with a jerk of his thumb to the matron on duty*) believe all your cursed stories for? &c.

There are, indeed, heart-broken mothers, forgiving fathers, and other really loving visitors, whose interviews are touching indeed; but the above is an example of the most common sort of 'friends' that pay their visits to Millbank and Brixton once in three months. Government is a far more true and tender friend than these. It devises methods by which good-conduct has its reward, not merely in remission of sentence, but in treatment within the prison walls; and when that good-conduct has extended over a certain time at Millbank, the prisoner is removed to the less severe discipline of Brixton, and from that again to the comparative comfort of Fulham Refuge. Now and then, too, on medical grounds, a sufferer receives a pardon for her past offences, and is allowed to go free, that she may die in the arms of the friends or the parents from whom she has fled in early days.

There are a vast number of various characters, of whose crimes the public were once cognizant enough, portrayed in these two volumes, from the murderer of her children to the fashionable lady-swindler. But no general deduction can be drawn from them, by reason not only of their variety but of their inconsistencies. Those persons who have committed the worst crimes, who have only just escaped the gallows, are commonly the best behaved in prison. They are often sluggish and mechanical, like beasts of burden, and they are as destitute, as beasts, of feeling. A mother and daughter are described under the name of Garnett, who present a picture of brutality such as would be terrible even if it were unparalleled; and it is not even uncommon—at Millbank. These two had murdered a second daughter of the elder prisoner by cruelty and starvation. The case was the worst the present writer ever remembers, and he remembers it well in spite of the assumed name. They were found 'Guilty,' and the whole country demanded their death. Nevertheless, by some mistaken lenity (as I still believe it to have been) this abominable pair were spared, and have now even attained their liberty after a long penal servitude. After they had quietly worked their way to 'association,' or the right of companionship, they were considerably allowed to occupy the same cell, instead of each being placed with a stranger. Their first meeting was marked by this outburst of affection: 'Well, Elizabeth.' 'Well, mother.' Then they sat down opposite one another to work. After a week's 'association,' a matron asked the daughter whether she was not glad to have her mother as her companion. 'Ye-es, lady,' was her hesitating answer; 'it's a

kind of change, but'—with a little impulsive dash—'she do make a great mess and litter, to be sure!'

This apathy was the combined result of brutish ignorance and excessive penury. Our prison matron is not inclined to believe in the innocence of prisoners, but in this case she is of opinion that this hideous unimpassionability was more the cause of the younger child's death than any studied attempt to starve her. As to what is the chief cause of all the wickedness which she describes, our authoress is not in the least doubt whatever. It is Besotted Ignorance. Out of three hundred Millbank women, ninety-six can neither read nor write, and only twenty-two are able to do so with ease. 'Freedom with these was the liberty of the wild beast—free to roam anywhere, uncared for and unchecked; left to wander in the darkness, without one helping-hand stretched forth to lead them to a brighter life; no honest example ever before them; but the path of evil they were to follow, clearly indicated by all with whom they came into contact.' The poor creatures themselves know this. They absolutely taunt the lady-prisoners with their superior education. 'You was lar'nt better than us,' say they, 'and shouldn't ha' come here.' When we have done splitting hairs about sectarian dogmas, we shall perhaps some day think of Compulsory Education, and until we do so the prison matron's occupation will not be gone. Education within the walls is found to be almost futile. With such indolent and stupendously ignorant pupils, the prison-school is a mere burlesque of teaching.

Let us conclude our notice of this wise but melancholy book with at least one cheerful statement. When the term of a woman's punishment is over, there is one 'helping-hand stretched forth to lead her to a brighter life,' in the *Discharged Prisoners' Aid Society*. It is called, and justly, by these unhappy creatures, 'the Home.' Twice have we advocated in these columns its claims to the pecuniary assistance of our readers. The authoress of *Female Life in Prison* corroborates all that we have said of it. Over her volumes many a tear will be dropped from sympathising eyes; but would it not be better for some of us to drop a subscription?

THE CHEAP CASTLE.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS—CHAPTER I.

To be sold, with immediate possession, a Castle, on the sea-coast of Blankshire, with ample accommodation for a family of distinction. Noblemen or gentlemen treating for the same without the intervention of an agent, will meet with liberal terms. For particulars and cards to view, apply to Messrs Nockemdon, Auctioneers and Estate Agents, London; or to Mr Nathaniel Graves, Cinqueport, Blankshire.

The above is an advertisement which occupied a place in the *Mansion* column of the *Times* last March, and had done so pretty often before, I have no doubt. You remember it, reader, I dare say, who have passed more than one autumn yachting off that coast, and as you read it, have wondered whether it referred to Eyrie Towers, that stands so majestically to the east of Cinqueport, above the foam and roar of the Atlantic. And you, reader, who peruse the *Times* (for cheapness' sake) in your Institute, you have read it too, and remembering that steam-boat excursion of which you formed a unit, in August last, and which was erroneously termed a pleasure-trip, you also call to mind Eyrie Towers, for the good-natured skipper touched you on the back—you were leaning over the side—as the vessel passed it, and exclaimed: 'There, mate, would you not like to live in a house like that?' To which you replied faintly: 'I don't care where it is, captain, so long as it's on the blessed dry land.'

You are both right my friends; Eyrie Towers is the very place alluded to by that advertisement, albeit

when I had learned as much from Messrs Nockemdon it afforded no information to me. I am not a sea-going man myself, never having personally explored what is very properly termed 'the waste of waters'—for why should there be so much of it?—further than Herne Bay; nor have I, until quite lately, ever seen Eyrie Towers from seaward, although I have been its proprietor these six months. However, I am anticipating. When I first caught sight of this advertisement, I was sitting in the breakfast-room in my villa on Wimbledon Common; my eyes wandered from the newspaper to the plate-glass window, through which was to be seen the well-ordered garden, with its trim borders, and painfully distinct paths, and the white gate, and that dusty high-road on the other side of it, along which I should presently be carried away into the teeming city. Then these things faded away from my retina, and in place of them arose a castle in the air, yet by the sea, surrounded with spacious but inartificial pleasure-grounds; a place far removed from the pursuit which had made a prisoner of me for two score of years, and whither the voice of the 'bus cad, with his 'Bank, Bank, City Bank,' had never penetrated, nor even the shrill whistle of the locomotive. Only the mighty roar of ocean should break in upon me, instead of the incessant hurdy-gurdy, and the snowy foam of the storm-stirred deep, instead of 'blacks.' As for air, I daresay that it is fresh enough at Wimbledon—when the Volunteers don't make it half gunpowder—but fresh air, different from beef in this respect, is nothing when one compares it with salt. The smell of the sea, that mysterious unparalleled odour, without which a sea-side place is as disappointing to me as that bastard scentless flower, the dog-violet, was what I pined for. Instead of going to Margate or Ramsgate, as was my usual custom for many months in the year, I had come to Wimbledon; and for all the good that the change had at present effected, I might just as well have remained in Baker Street. Our butler, Muggles—who never forgot that his late master was a baronet—had declined to put up with Margate accommodation any more; we had come to our present house for the spring months on trial, and it was understood that the residence was giving him satisfaction; but still I made no doubt that a Castle would meet with Muggles's more entire approbation, having been always accustomed, as he was wont to observe, to 'high-life and its environs'—by which I believe he meant to signify its accessories.

We ourselves were not, strictly speaking, aristocrats (although, let me tell you, Stockbroking is far from a vulgar trade), but we were visited by those who were. Though we did have a house in Baker Street, we were not merely 'genteel' people; and besides, as I have already said, we only lived there half the year. There was no absolute incongruity in our residing in a castle—writing one's letters on note-paper with engravings of the stately pile in its N., S., E., and W. aspects, and having its title printed with elaborate diminutiveness on one's card—but it was unquestionably a great step (in the right direction), and the contemplation of it caused a certain flutter of the spirits. If I had confided the idea to my wife, it would certainly have astonished her; and retrogression would have become exceedingly difficult, if not impossible, should Louisa Adelaide, our daughter, once recognise the practicability of such a design. 'Yes,' thought I, as I let the newspaper repose upon my knee, and gazed upon that unconscious young lady as she helped herself for the third time to apricot jam, 'that girl would adorn any sphere. It is positively a waste of power to keep her in a villa. It is the duty of a father to provide what is most appropriate for his offspring—the very birds of the air perform what is right in that respect: her appetite, too, is failing;

she wants sea-air : to reside in some elevated spot—say the tower in the east wing. Louisa Adelaide shall have her Castle.'

There was another reason, too (which there is now no necessity for concealing), connected with my daughter, which urged me to this step. It would place us at once at a social elevation to which young Theodosius Chane, the civil engineer (whom I used to call Theodolite before I found myself obliged to keep him at a distance), would scarcely venture to aspire. It was impertinent enough of him to emerge from lodgings in Camden Town to hang about Louisa Adelaide at a villa with a double coach-house; but to pay his addresses to her at a Castle, would, I thought, be a little too presumptuous even for him.

So, when I went into town, instead of driving straight to the city, I called at Messrs Nockemdon to make inquiries. The clerk in the glass case, who had doubtless remarked the high stepping bays that brought me, was not in the least astonished at my coming after the Castle, and he introduced me at once to his principal, who was not astonished either. If I only liked the place half as well as Sir Ranagan Flanagan and family, to whom he had last let it, I should never repent the purchase.

'Then it can be rented, can it,' said I, 'instead of bought?' Well—no—it could not be rented. He did not quite understand the circumstances of the case, but he supposed that the proprietor was now anxious to realise. Mr Graves of Cinqueport, through which town I must needs pass to get to Eyrie Towers, was in possession of all the requisite information; but the Messrs Nockemdon had merely instructions as to price. From the photographs just taken of the mansion in question, he might say, with respect to this matter, that the place was dirt cheap. 'Quite a show-place, sir, I give you my honour.'

Here the photographs were exhibited. Eyrie Towers, from every point of view, might have been the hereditary habitation of a line of Irish peers at the very least. There was not, however, the least tinge of decay or neglect about it, to remind one of Ireland. The garden, although not extensive, was well kept; and the shrubberies upon the land-side trimmed with tasteful care. Towards the sea, the castle was unprotected; a stone terrace, a little lawn, and a light iron fence alone intervened between it and the boundless ocean. Louisa Adelaide would certainly get air enough. There was not much ground about it anywhere; a field or two; an avenue; and what was locally termed 'a bunney,' a ravine or chine running down into the sea, comprehended all the territory. Beside the bunney (but having no connection with it), there was a 'right of free warren' over a certain sandy tract, and upon this Mr Nockemdon was vaguely eulogistic, although I don't believe he knew what it meant any more than I did. The external advantages of the property also included a sort of marine lordship; a third of all that came on shore in the way of wreck, between two headlands lying east and west of the Castle, was the property of its lord. This valuable privilege had been conceded to the founder of the ancient race, who had once inhabited Eyrie Towers, by King Stephen, on account of his having burned a village in the vicinity, inhabitants and all, because, upon being pricked with lance-heads, they had given provisions to some troops of the opposite faction. Only the queen, and one or two nobles in the United Kingdom, I was informed, had preserved this feudal right; and the possession of it, in point of social position, was incalculably valuable. Mr Nockemdon only regretted to add, that, in consequence of the mistaken benevolence of the time, the power of life and death formerly enjoyed by the lord of Eyrie Towers over the people of Cinqueport was abrogated. Still, I should doubtless find the trades-people devoted to me.

But after all, the gem of the property was the Castle itself. This was none of your modern castellated erections, with pepper-box towers, and alits for loopholes, such as those through which one drops half-crowns (or pennies, which sound as well) into missionary-boxes; but a two-winged mansion, with courtyard and clock tower (the latter picturesquely ivied), a drawbridge spanning what had formerly been a moat, but which was now a sunk garden, and even several bonâ-fide dungeons. The dining-room was adapted for the entertainment of thirty retainers (and some of them, if necessary, upon horseback), in addition to the family circle; while in the deep projecting oriels of the drawing-room, four or five flirtations might be carried on without any one happy pair interfering with the seclusion of another.

'I am afraid,' said I sighing, 'that this beautiful place is a little beyond my figure.'

'O dear, no, sir,' smiled Mr Nockemdon, as though my banker's book were lying before him; 'you will find the price the only insignificant thing about it. It is, indeed, in five figures, but they are five excessively small ones;' and he told me what they were.

'And does that include the fixtures?' inquired I, as calmly as I could, for I was really astounded at the lowliness of the price.

'The whole of them,' returned the agent; 'and whatever furniture you wish to retain, may be bought at a valuation. I may tell you, however, that the less you have to do with a professional broker the cheaper you are likely to get it. The proprietor, Mr Graves informs me, has a great objection to business-men of all kinds. I trust that you are not yourself a lawyer, sir—that is well—for I doubt whether the proprietor would ever part with Eyrie Towers to a person of that profession.'

I turned a little pale at this, for I had set my heart on the Castle, and began to doubt whether the hereditary possessor would soil his fingers with the purchase-money of one who had passed his life in Bulling or Bearing.

'I sympathise deeply,' said I, 'with the peculiar feelings of the nobleman or gentleman in question—please let him know *that*—do, please. I shall be happy to run down to the Castle, and talk the matter over with him as man with man.'

'My dear sir,' exclaimed the house-agent, smiling compassionately, 'it is quite impossible that the proprietor of Eyrie Towers could entertain in person any pecuniary propositions from a stranger, no matter how distinguished his social position. It could not be done. Mr Graves has the fullest authority to treat; he will shew you over the property, and into every room of the mansion, which is at present tenantless, except for a domestic or two, who keep the place in order, and exhibit it to strangers upon presentation of their address cards. On Mondays and Fridays, the apartments of the Castle are at present shewn to visitors; but of course it will lie in your power to take away that privilege, if you prefer seclusion.'

This statement, carelessly uttered as it was, perhaps, was really a most seductive one. I am not an ostentatious person, but still—I put it to any gentleman of Throgmorton Street—was it not an elevating thought that people should come to look not only at one's drawbridge and ivied clock tower, but at one's sitting-rooms and sleeping apartments; although, of course, in case of illness upon a Monday or Friday, this would be attended with some inconvenience. A request to take the photographs of Eyrie Towers home to my wife and family that day, was courteously acceded to, and I returned with a portfolio of them to Wimbledon, already in imagination a feudal chieftain.

One of the happiest evenings of my life was spent on that occasion. It was worth almost any money—

even in five figures—to see the faces of my wife and daughter kindle with glad wonder, as I told them, after all their admiration of these pictures, that they represented a reality which might be their own. Even Muggles, who was somehow made a confidant of this coming grandeur, condescended to express his opinion that Eyrie Towers would 'do.' It was just such an 'environ' of high-life as he had been accustomed to from the first hour he had drawn a cork. Wimbledon looked small, although doubtless excellently adapted for the wants of the middle classes, as I started the next morning for Cinqueport.

CHAPTER II.

The one thing which rather mitigated my high spirits, as I lay back in the railway carriage with a 'landed,' though not, I trust, an overweening air, was the suspicion suggested by Louisa Adelaide, that the photographs of Eyrie Towers might have been taken from pictures (which are apt to flatter places as well as people), instead of from the noble pile itself. If so, it was not merely the device of the house-agent to enhance the place, for all the stationers' shops in Cinqueport had specimens of the same views. An excursion to Eyrie Towers, 'by kind permission of Nathaniel Graves, Esq.,' was advertised upon the walls to take place in the ensuing month. Tickets to admit parties of not less than nine to view the apartments of Eyrie Towers on the days it was not open to the public, were to be procured of Nathaniel Graves, Esq., for half a crown!

I wondered what the exclusive proprietor thought of a proceeding of that nature. Of course, it was no business of mine at present; but I confess that, even to me, there was a smack of something particularly inconsistent with the feudal system in that reduction on taking a quantity. However, upon the whole, I was gratified. Eyrie Towers was, as Mr Nockemdon had averred, without doubt, 'quite a show-place;' and if it had been about to be pulled down, and its historical fragments disposed of for building purposes, the arrangements for giving the public a last look at it could not have been more energetic and complete.

I observed something of this kind at a print-shop, where I inquired my way to Mr Graves's, and the young lady behind the counter, whom I addressed, replied laughingly, and with a shake of her curls: 'Well, sir, we may not long—if all we hear be true—have the opportunity of visiting Eyrie Towers at all.'

She looked at me so roguishly, that I knew at once she suspected me of becoming its purchaser; and I set this down as being the result of my landed air. 'That young woman shall come whenever she likes,' thought I, 'whether it's Monday or Friday, or any other day. I daresay she takes me for one of those haughty aristocrats who would keep the people out of everything; but I shall let her know I am nothing of the kind.' I made a mental resolution to send her a card, with 'Admit the bearer' on it, signed Tompkins (without any Christian name, in the old feudal fashion); and I took down the address over the shop-door (H. Walker, Sharp Street) with that intention, and put it in my pocket-book.

Mr Nathaniel Graves lived only a few doors off in the same street (No. 1), but his house lay back within a courtyard, and was evidently the habitation of a man of means. What calling he professed, I had not inquired; but had I not been informed of the antipathy which the ancestral proprietor of Eyrie Towers entertained towards lawyers, I should have set down Mr Nathaniel Graves for an attorney, pure and simple—if I may make use of so great a contradiction in terms. He was the nearest approach to a tierrier that the Human is permitted to arrive at under the present physical laws; he smiled upon me

exactly as that animal grins at 'varmint,' and his clothes were black and his complexion tan. His notion of conversation seemed to be a series of snaps, from which, however, I had no difficulty in gathering that I had come down to Cinqueport upon an almost hopeless errand. There was a gentleman already in the market who had seen the place but yesterday, and whose final offer (which included all the furniture as it stood) he was expecting hourly. Still there might be some hitch; and at all events, he, Mr Graves, was instructed to sell the demesne to the first *bond-fide* bidder. He was inundated by letters about it by every post, although the advertisement was only just inserted, and should be heartily glad to get the matter off his hands. It was one that ought never to have been intrusted to him.

'Why so?' asked I.

'Because the price which my employer has chosen to put upon the place is simply preposterous,' jerked out the little man; 'because it is like setting one to sell so many sovereigns for pennies within a stipulated time for a stupid bet. "Let me have done with it at once, and pocket the money, although it be not half price," is what my employer says. It is not business at all—he says he hates business—but sheer folly. Did you happen to hear from Messrs Nockemdon what is the amount at which my employer fixes the purchase-money of Eyrie Towers, with its pleasure-gardens and pasture-lands, with its avenues of stately trees, with its right of free warren and valuable feudal privileges in connection with jetsam and flotsam?'

'Yes,' said I; 'and if the place comes up to the photographs, I think the Castle is cheap.'

'Cheap!' snapped Mr Nathaniel Graves as though he would have snapped my nose off; 'it's preposterous. Come and look at the place. If I had only the money to spare, myself, I would not have troubled you to come down here, you may be sure.'

He lent me a saddle-horse, and accompanied me himself on a black pony to the spot in question. The air of sarcastic depreciation with which he treated the property which I had come down as a purchaser to view, was a thing quite unique in bargaining, and might, I should think, be advantageously adopted. As we rode across that desolate sandy tract over which the proprietor of Eyrie Towers had such mysterious rights, I observed that it did not look very valuable.

'No,' snapped the agent viciously, 'it's worth nothing, absolutely nothing. The rabbits are not innumerable, and do not sell for fourpence apiece in Cinqueport without their skins. The sand is valueless in the extensive glass-manufactories yonder. These long grasses are not of incalculable use for basket-weaving. It is not even a pleasant galloping-ground, with the finest air in England, whether from sea or land; and Eyrie Towers is not a picturesque object when beheld from this rising-ground. O no, not at all.'

He drew rein as he finished the sentence, and pointed scoffingly to seaward with a bitter laugh. A finer natural landscape never met my eye than was afforded by that long reach of undulating sand-hills, tufted with heather, and margined with those forests of pine, blown backward by the aggregate force of a thousand sea-winds. Nor had the hand of man been backward in completing the picture, for before us, half girdled by woods of livelier green, stood up a stone-gray castle, ivied yet not decrepit, but proudly bidding defiance to the ocean that chafed and roared beneath its feet. Instead of swallows, the sea-gulls circled around its towers, and tossed and tumbled like the foam itself in the unclouded blue. Immediately beneath us lay a sailless sea, but on the horizon, even while we looked, speck after speck arose and grew, as if by magic, until the sun shone on a glittering squadron.

'How glorious!—how magnificent!' cried I enthusiastically. 'What can those ships be, Mr Graves? They seem to be very large ones.'

'It is only the Channel fleet,' replied the agent carelessly. 'A person who lives in a place like Eyrie Towers cannot expect to see such sights as a London gentleman. There is nothing to excite yourself about, sir. Take care, or your horse will be in the quarry.'

'Oh, there's a quarry, too, is there?' said I, for I felt quite ashamed of not seeing everything *couleur de rose* by this time. 'You never mentioned that.'

'Not I,' returned the other with irritation; 'it was not worth mentioning. If I was to tell you all that my employer is giving away for next to nothing, I should never have finished the catalogue. Yet some people consider a quarry of Portland stone to be rather valuable. The whole subject is painful to me. Come, let us see the castle, and have done with it.'

With that, Mr Nathaniel Graves set spurs to his black pony, and put it to a speed of which I should not have conceived it capable.

'You ride uncommonly fast, sir,' expostulated I, 'considering how excessively near this roadway is to the cliff.'

'Why, yes,' returned the agent hastily, 'it is rather near; the fact is, the soil grows more productive inland, and therefore, from motives of economy, I suppose, Sir Ranagan Flanagan has made the road, as it were, to skirt the Eyrie property. It certainly did not use to run so near the sea as it does now.'

'Sir Ranagan Flanagan!' exclaimed I; 'why, I understood he was only a tenant! Mr Nockemdon told me'—

'Mr Nockemdon knows nothing about it,' interrupted the agent. 'Sir Ranagan is the proprietor, although he bought the domain—for a much larger sum than he now offers it for—only a few years back. He is an Irishman, or else I should say he was a madman, to wish to part with a place like this.'

Certainly, with every stride of our horses the castle seemed to grow more imposing, as well as more habitable. It was evidently not only feudal, but convenient—which is quite another thing.

At this moment, a dreadful suspicion struck me, which set my heart beating, and sunk my spirits to zero.

'What is the matter?' inquired the agent, almost as agitated as myself, and unquestionably turning a little pale.

'Nothing,' said I—'nothing.' Then, as carelessly as I could: 'Are there any old servants, retainers of the ancient family, still remaining at Eyrie Towers?'

'Yes,' replied Mr Graves; 'there are both the housekeeper and the gardener. It is the latter who will open for us the lodge-gates.'

This was a venerable man with silver hair, and an expression in his countenance not only of sadness, but, as I imagined, of pity for myself, which corroborated my worst apprehensions.

'He can never get over the departure of his old masters,' explained Mr Graves in a low tone; 'but he has a great sense of duty, and makes an excellent servant. Sir Ranagan gives him the highest character.'

Mrs Mortmain, the housekeeper, had a still more lugubrious appearance, and she also cast upon me a glance, which, without being exactly one of love, was certainly akin to pity.

'Well, madam, and how do you do?' observed the agent; 'neither you nor Thomas seem in high feather. I want you to shew this gentleman the Castle to its best advantage, and if he takes it, I am sure that you need not fear losing your situation.'

'Well, sir, you know we must all go in a very little time, for'— She blushed and stammered, but did not finish her sentence.

'Never you mind that, Mrs Mortmain,' replied the agent hastily; 'let us enjoy ourselves while we can. She is a victim to religious despondency,' added he in a whisper.

But I was not to be hoodwinked so. As I walked through the sombre, oak-panelled corridors, and visited library and drawing-room, hall and bower, there was one question always trembling on my lip, and only waiting the absence of Mr Nathaniel Graves to be expressed in words. That astute gentleman, however, never left us alone for an instant, and I had to trust to the woman's evident natural honesty, at last, to answer me with the house-agent by her side.

'Now, look here,' said I, as we stood in the ancient armoury among the veritable garments of those who had perished in tourney and fight, and underneath the torn and blood-stained banners which had been borne before them perhaps to their last fields, 'please to answer what I shall ask you, Mrs Mortmain, with all truth. This Castle is cheap, and yet it seems very valuable; this Castle is comfortable, yet its last tenant tired of it in less than two years— Never you mind Mr Graves, but look at me. Here, among these mouldering relics of the past, and within hearing, it may be, of the spirits of the bygone owners of this stately place, I charge you to answer this—*Is Eyrie Towers haunted?*'

'Lor' bless you, no, sir,' ejaculated the housekeeper, with a simple heartiness of negation, about the genuineness of which there could be no doubt.

'Really, you do astonish me, Mr Tompkins,' observed the agent: 'I should have taken you for a person wholly beyond the reach of any such ridiculous superstition.'

There was an air of relief about him when I had once given utterance to this apprehension, which I still thought a little suspicious, but beyond that I saw nothing—and I saw everything with the exception of the beach, to which Mr Graves humorously observed it was unnecessary to descend, unless after a storm, to secure my flotsam and jetsam—to make me pause in the resolution I had formed to anticipate the offer of the gentleman who was already in the market, and to give Sir Ranagan Flanagan his price.

In twenty-four hours, the land about the place had been surveyed and valued by a person in whom I could trust; and within a week, the title-deeds of Eyrie Towers were lodged at my banker's, and I found myself the proprietor of the Cheap Castle.

Why it was cheap, remains to be told.

(To be continued.)

THE WINESHOPS AND EATING-HOUSES OF PARIS.

WHAT the motive may be which induces so many of our countrymen to exaggerate the defects of Englishmen, and to exalt the merits of foreigners, I never could discover, but it may in some instances arise from the fact, that they know something of the English, while their experience of foreigners is derived from a few days' residence in Paris. After that sojourn, they consider themselves competent to give an opinion on the manners and morals of Frenchmen. Not many months ago an American, at a public meeting in Paris, bewailed the drunkenness he had seen in London, and added, that he had travelled through France to its capital, and during the whole journey, and his residence in that city, he had not seen one drunken individual; a statement which, according to the newspapers, was received with much cheering. The speaker omitted to say that not four days had elapsed since he had disembarked at Calais, and that the few miles which separates that port from Paris had been traversed in a railway-carriage. Drunkenness appears to be the

principal topic which leads to the institution of comparisons so unfavourable to our national character; but there are other points in which we are disadvantageously compared with Frenchmen. As I have lived in Paris, and not merely spent a holiday there, I will, with the permission of the editor of this Journal, give some information touching wine-shops and eating-houses, which may be novel to English readers.

First, I cannot pretend to give an estimate of the number of wine-shops in Paris, of my own knowledge; but Mr Hardy stated in the House of Commons that they were not less than 360,000; and though this number does appear so enormous, that, considering the size of Paris, I am inclined to think there must have been an error in printing the figures, yet I can say that they abound to such an extent, that, in comparison, London drinking-houses are exceedingly few and far between. In the more populous parts of Paris especially, there is a wine-shop at the corner of almost every street, and before you get a hundred yards further, you may count five or six others. These wine-shops are for the most part of mean appearance, and utterly unworthy in this respect of comparison with the gin-shops of the English metropolis. Their interiors are obscure, in consequence of the windows being filled with rows of bottles, and covered with inscriptions. The narrow pewter counter is loaded with little glasses, shewing that the greater number of customers are mere passers-by, who enter without having the trouble of pushing a door open, take their glass of brandy or absinthe, or whatever *liqueur* they prefer, and go their way. In most of these wine-shops, food is sold, though the demand is not extensive, and the supply is usually confined to a little bit of spiced beef, a German sausage, cheese, and perhaps a small piece of boiled bacon. The major portion of the customers of these shops are workmen, *commissionnaires*, and mechanics; but there are a good number of men who cannot be included in either of these categories.

Near the markets, and in the poor outskirts, are numerous wine-shops of inferior, and often disreputable appearance, which, in slang phrase, are termed *débits de consolations*. These do not sell much wine, but a great deal of brandy, and a variety of liqueurs. A large part of the frontage, which is not extensive, is absorbed by the opening, made as broad as possible, to admit of the easy incoming and outgoing of customers, and possibly also not without consideration for the condition in which they may be on their departure. Along the walls are ranged the different *consolations*; and early in the morning, and late in the evening, you see the consumers thereof seated on benches playing at dominoes, or silently smoking, probably meditating on schemes they would not like to confide to their neighbours, for they are usually representatives of the lowest element of Parisian life. I am pretty conversant with the French language, but I have heard these men use a dialect in conversing with their own associates which was quite unintelligible to me; and even when intelligible, so filled with idioms and phrases, which made it something quite different to the feeble language used by the respectable classes.

The entrance of a known *mouchard* or spy into one of these places, late at night, causes a very perceptible sensation among a good many of these gentry, and the foreigner of inquiring mind who ventures within at the same period, had better look well to his pockets. Such houses as these abounded in those narrow streets of the *city* which have been pulled down within the last four or five years to make way for the improvements. I once visited one of the worst of the dens in this quarter, known as the *Lapin Blanc*, referred to by Sue in the *Mysteries of Paris*, in order that a Scotch friend might have his curiosity gratified respecting Paris ruffians; and no doubt he has since horrified many respectable friends by his description of those he

met, though he probably omits to mention that he did not get out till we had paid for as many *consolations* as would have made a score of Englishmen utterly insensible alike to consolations and vexations. The keepers of those wine-shops which have been pulled down have mostly migrated outside the barriers; and here it is you see the Frenchman going in for steady drinking, because he gets his drink at a cheaper rate, in consequence of its not having paid the *octroi* or duty levied at the barriers on all such commodities as are sent into the city. It is the Parisian custom of resorting to these places which has led Englishmen, who commonly never go outside the barriers, except in a railway-carriage, to imagine that Frenchmen never get drunk. Outside more than one of these shops, where wretched brandy is sold at two sous the glass, I have seen several individuals at one time stretched on the ground, quite oblivious of existence. On Sundays, crowds of workmen, their wives, and *griettes*, pass through the barriers to these places, and sit there for hours; and it is curious to remark how contrary to the received notions respecting the sociability of Frenchmen is the conduct of the men you see here towards each other. Hardly a man speaks to his neighbour, or interferes with him in any way. If two half-drunken individuals quarrel, and resort to blows, the rest sit still, and regard the encounter with the same complacency as though it were a gratuitous spectacle got up for their amusement. If any interference takes place at all, it is for the purpose of keeping the waiters from checking the ardour of the combatants.

After Sunday, the customers of many of these *guingettes* are mostly thieves or *chiffonniers*, and men of similar occupations. Some are very largely patronised. I remember one house near the *Barrière Rouchonart* which offered a singular spectacle at night. The room was long and narrow, there being room for only two rows of tables, and at these tables sat men and women as closely as they could pack. Judging them by their dress, they belonged to very different grades of society; but the faces of both men and women revealed the equality which in reality existed among them. They were all thieves or the associates of thieves. Some of the men had faces which were actually fascinating from their villainous expression. Some, who probably had just made a successful lift, were drinking and singing, as though life had not a care; while others were engaged in earnest conversation, most likely planning an operation of a similar kind, or settling accounts in regard to past transactions. While we were quietly smoking our cigars, and drinking lemonade, two policemen entered. Their presence seemed to become known from one end of the room to the other in an instant, and almost perfect silence succeeded to the hum of the moment before. Some of the men looked sullenly at the table before them, and feigned unconsciousness of the enemy's presence; others, on the contrary, looked up with an affectedly cheerful aspect, and saluted the officers as they passed. Whether this visit was made with the view of finding any particular offender, or merely for the purpose of refreshing their memories by a sight of the faces of these outcasts of society, I cannot say, but I hoped, as we followed them out, that after the attention with which they had honoured us, we might not fall into their hands under suspicious circumstances.

As I had no thought of writing this little paper when in Paris, I did not attempt to ascertain from police statistics how far the general morality of the population was affected by the abundance of these wine-shops, but quoting from the same authority as with respect to their number, there are 1100 homicides annually in Paris, and of these, 400 are perpetrated in these establishments.

As regards eating-houses, these are far more numerous in proportion than in any other city I know of.

There are enormous establishments of this kind where hundreds dine every day, and at a cost which, variety considered, is much less than would have to be disbursed if the dinner eater chose to dine at home. At one of these places, Seltzer-water is laid on almost as liberally and cheaply as a London water-company supplies its customers; and at another the soup is poured out with such abundance, that the fountains in Trafalgar Square are mere dribblers in comparison. Of course, at the large hotels and restaurants you may spend any sum you please on a dinner; but the charge at the different *table-d'hôtes* ranges from five francs down to one franc; and at no place I visited was the food so good and plentiful as I could get at a London ordinary for the same amount. Beside these eating-houses, there are men and women who call themselves fried-potato merchants, who confine their dealings to that esculent, the rich brown of which has a not untempting aspect. Others style themselves *arlequin* merchants, the *arlequins* being fragments of cooked meat, the perquisites of cooks. There used to be an establishment of this humble kind over which was written *à l'hasard de la fourchette*, and they may be common now, for aught I know to the contrary. The speculative person who preferred the chance of getting a dinner cheap or going without it altogether, paid his two sous to the proprietor of an enormous soup-kettle, in which the soup was kept close upon boiling-point; a two-pronged fork was then given him, and he was entitled to plunge this once to the bottom of the kettle. If he stuck it into one of the pieces of meat floating about in the soup, he was lucky; but if, as was most frequently the case, he drew the fork out bare, the only consolation he had was that which is said to be practised by the polar bear for his maintenance in winter-time.

GOLD IN NOVA SCOTIA.

SOME attention has of late been drawn to the gold-fields recently discovered in Nova Scotia. The reports from the colony are not nearly so encouraging or highly coloured as those from British Columbia; but men with capital to invest, who will be content with moderate returns, may find that Nova Scotia possesses superior advantages over the latter colony. The country is settled, and a large portion well cultivated, the necessities of life are plentiful and cheap, while communication with the mother-country is easy, Halifax being within ten or eleven days' sail of Liverpool by the Cunard line. In the summer of 1861, a man stooping to drink at a brook, discovered something glittering in the water; this on examination proved to be gold, and the Old Tangier diggings attracted many people. Since then, however, gold has been discovered at New Tangier, eleven miles distant from the former, and within three-quarters of a mile of the sea. Other gold-fields were soon added to the above, so that at the present time a large body of men are engaged at different parts of the province in quartz-mining and washing. Within a few miles of Halifax lie two gold-fields, Laidlaw's and Lawrence-town. The former lies within ten miles of the capital. You cross the harbour in the ferry to Dartmouth, and take the road winding round the chain of lakes. With everything looking fresh and green, trees in full leaf, the lakes themselves varied in appearance, now a narrow strip of water glistening through the foliage, and now a broad lake spreading out from the very edge of the road, the drive is a real source of pleasure. At the head of one of the longest lakes are situated the Laidlaw diggings. A few years ago, and hardly a house was in the neighbourhood; now two quartz-crushers have been erected, one of which is in operation; and numerous shops and shanties for miners' lodgings have been built. The quartz formation there is the most singular in the province; it is not found in veins, varying in width

from a few inches to one or two feet, but is spread over the hill in broad masses, looking when uncovered like trunks of trees laid side by side. These 'barrels,' as they are called from their rounded appearance, are met at various depths beneath the surface, varying from one or two to many feet, and through every one of them gold is distributed.

The whole of the hill is taken up in three-quarter-acre claims, and some very fine specimens of auriferous quartz have been obtained. In many pieces of quartz gold is visible in small nuggets, in others in specks distributed over them, and in others it is only obtained by crushing. At the foot of the hill is situated the crusher of the Nova Scotia Gold Company. The quartz is first roasted by a moderate heat, to drive off sulphur and other impurities; and from the kilns it is taken on a tramway to the mill. On entering the building, one is almost deafened by the noise. Twelve large stampers are rising and falling on the quartz fed in under them, which, as fast as it is crushed to a fine powder, is washed off by a stream of water flowing under the stampers to a box or trough nearly full of mercury; from thence the quartz-powder passes over another box; then over copper-plates coated with mercury; and finally over blankets, spread to catch the fine gold, if any has escaped. The mercury seizes upon and amalgamates with the gold; and in order to obtain it the amalgam is poured into an iron retort, under which a good but not too strong a fire is made. The retort has a pipe leading over to a bucket of water, and immersed slightly only at the end. The vapour which comes over from the mercury is condensed, and after it is all driven off, the gold is found in the retort, looking very like 'Durham Mustard.' Care must be taken in retorting to prevent the escape of any of the fumes from the mercury, as, if inhaled, they would be most injurious. There are many patents and inventions for extracting the gold from quartz. Our inventive cousins, of course, have their ideas on the subject, and are attempting to introduce untried and expensive machines. The price of crushing at the Nova Scotia Gold Company's works is sixteen shillings per ton. The yield of gold is very uncertain. Some quartz has yielded sixty-four shillings per ton, and some only forty-eight; but this last will pay very fairly. During this present summer, the whole of the hill will be opened, and there is every reason to believe that a large portion of the owners of claims will make money. At Lawrence-town, which is twelve miles to the east of Dartmouth, Laidlaw's being to the north, the diggings are of two kinds—the 'placer' or washings, and the mining for quartz veins. They were discovered in July 1861, and claims were taken up by several people on a hill overlooking the Lawrence-town River. In one or two of these, the washings were rich, and the bed-rock shewed an auriferous quartz vein. The claims, however, being only 50 feet by 20, were too small to be profitably worked, and in the autumn of 1861, the ground on which these claims were laid off was purchased by the Nova Scotia Gold Company. To the west and north of this ground, several claims were taken up, and worked throughout last winter. In some instances, the perseverance of the miners has been rewarded by the discovery of valuable veins. One of two partners sold his share for £44, after maintaining himself for a whole winter by the sale of gold taken from their quartz.

The Nova Scotia Gold Company commenced operations this last spring. On their ground, there are rich washings and quartz veins. In 'prospecting' or searching for gold, the miner generally uses a tin or iron pan, circular, about fifteen inches in diameter, with sides two inches deep, sloping from the bottom outwards. When earth is found likely, from the presence of small pieces of quartz and other signs, to contain gold, this is filled, and carried to the nearest

pool of water. The pan is sunk just under water, and the dirt well stirred; all large stones, after being carefully cleaned, being removed by hand. The gold-seeker then commences giving the pan a rotatory and oscillating motion in the water, allowing it to wash and beat over the sides, carrying out with it the top surface of dirt. This motion is kept up till perhaps three-fourths of the panful is washed away, then the remainder is shaken well over the bottom of the pan, and brought gradually forward to the edge of the pan, inclined to the water, the shaking of course keeping the gold at the bottom. Water is allowed to flow in over the surface of the earth, and then the pan being slightly lifted, it flows out, carrying with it a small portion of the dirt. This is repeated several times, until only a very small quantity is left. This shaken well over the pan, will shew the gold, generally in dust or small specks. When, however, a steady stream of water can be obtained, sluicing is resorted to. Long narrow boxes are set up, each fitting into the other, in lengths of from one to several hundred feet; through these a stream of water flows, and the dirt is shovelled in as fast as the water will carry it away. The bottoms of these sluice-boxes are fitted with 'false bottoms,' boards full of auger-holes, 'ripples or rifles,' narrow ledges of wood set across the sluice, and 'slats,' long strips of wood with a bevelled edge underneath, fitted together in rows. In these, the gold as it sinks is caught and detained, and the sluices are washed down every few days to collect it. A box with mercury in it is also employed in the sluices, sometimes to catch the fine or light gold, which is then obtained from it in the manner described above. To find a lead of auriferous ground, the pan is always employed, and the veins of quartz are often discovered by tracing up this lead. It is astonishing how accurately the pan will shew, in skillful hands, any alteration, however slight, in the richness of the ground.

The quartz veins hitherto found in Nova Scotia vary much in width. They are generally cased with slate, enclosed on both sides by whin rock; sometimes, however, slate may overlie them, and at others a body of slate may lie between two veins embedded on their outer sides by whin. Not only does each vein differ from another in width and appearance, but the veins themselves are often thick in one part and thin in another; rich with gold at one point, and without a speck to be obtained at another. The general bearing of the veins is north, from 78 degrees to 88 degrees west. Up to the present time, by far the larger portion of the gold-diggers have been living on hope. They have taken out large quantities of quartz, which still remains uncrushed; and therefore all reports published in the papers as to the general productiveness of the diggings must be received with great caution. Instances are not wanting of a large amount of gold being taken from one ton of quartz, but there are others where not a grain has been obtained. At the Sherbrooke diggings, still further to the eastward of Halifax than Tangier, there was a great rush in consequence of some fine leads being struck. Claims were taken up over supposed veins for a length of several miles, nearly the whole of which remain yet to be proved. There is perhaps less gold-fever in Nova Scotia than in Great Britain, as at present everything is so uncertain. It would be well for those who are inclined to rush to the gold-fields to think well over the step. In Nova Scotia, labourers' wages are generally about 4s. per day, and there has not been, as in other countries where gold-discoveries were made, any rise in the prices of food or clothing. The country opens a wide field for the investment of capital. There are large, and up to the present time, almost unworked coal-fields; iron is also to be obtained in considerable quantities. The climate is a fine one; the winter cold, but dry and bracing; and the summer hotter,

but of more equable temperature than those of England. There is very little real poverty in the country, and crimes at the diggings are almost unknown, a fact alike creditable to the people and the laws. Emigrants are arriving in small numbers from England, Scotland, and Wales. By the end of this summer, the diggings will have been thoroughly tested, and reliable information will then be obtained. The reports in the local papers must be received with great caution, as they are often written by interested parties; and it must be recollected that the press in America does not take the same trouble to obtain true reports from the different diggings as it would under similar circumstances in England.

'HIS NAME.'

FROM THE FRENCH OF VICTOR HUGO.

THE perfume of a lily pure, the lustre of a crown,
The latest breath of dying day,
A friend's complaint who cures our griefs in making them
his own,
The wing of Time's mysterious adieu ere it hath flown,
The murmur of sweet lips at play,
The mantle of the seven hues the storm leaves in the sky,
That trophy of the sun doth stream,
The unexpected tones of a dear voice long passed by,
The secret, innocently kept, of a young maiden's sigh,
An infant's first and fairest dream,
The chant of choirs heard from far, the morrow Memnon
bids
In fabled accents to the morn,
The music of a mystic sound that trembles nor abides,
All that thought entertains of things more fair and sweet
besides,
Less sweetly than 'his name' is borne.
Pronounce it lowly, 'neath the breath, as though it was a
prayer,
But in each chant let it be plain,
As of some solemn temple's gloom the secret light but
clear,
Or as the sacred word from the depths of the shrine we
hear,
Returned by the same voice again;
Believe me, oh my friends, before my Muse, in words of
flame,
Shall so mistake her proper flight,
That she shall dare to mingle title own'd of pride or
fame,
With that most perfect one for whom love in my soul
doth claim,
As holy treasure, place aright,
It may come to pass that these, my faithful hymns, she
sings,
Shall be as those we kneel to hear,
And that the air shall vibrate while her solemn anthem
rings,
As if 'twere shaken by invisible ambrosial wings
The while an angel pass'd near.

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